

CLAIMS

1. A method for operating a JAVA virtual machine comprising loading (30) a module comprising a parent JAVA class file, identifying (32) offspring JAVA class files listed within said parent JAVA class file, and preloading (34) said offspring JAVA class files.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said loading (30) comprises loading said module from the data portion of a digital broadcast signal.

3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said preloading (34) is carried out according to priority.

4. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein said parent JAVA class file is executed (36) concurrently with said preloading (34).

5. A method according to any preceding claim, and further comprising identifying (38) suboffspring JAVA class files listed within the offspring JAVA class files.

6. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein said preloading (34) comprises examining further modules for the presence of identified offspring JAVA class files and preloading said offspring JAVA class files accordingly.

7. Apparatus arranged to carry out any one of the method claims 1 to 6, comprising receiving means (12) for receiving a digital broadcast signal (14), and processing means (16) for processing said signal (14), said processing means (16) comprising a JAVA virtual machine (18).

8. Apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said apparatus is a set top box (10).

9. Apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said apparatus is a
5 digital television.

10. Apparatus according to claim 7, 8 or 9, wherein said JAVA virtual machine (18) comprises a computer program.

10 11. Apparatus according to claim 7, 8 or 9, wherein said JAVA virtual machine (18) is at least partially implemented in hardware.